

Message Text

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ACTION MMO-02

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, AMGT, APER, AFSP, JO

SUBJECT: REPROGRAMMING OF E/C POSITIONS

REF: STATE 101921

1. SUMMARY - PRESENT STAFF OF ECON/COMM SECTION IN AMMAN CONSISTS OF: A) ECON - FSO-5. ECON OFFICER WHO IS ALSO CHIEF OF ECONOMIC/ COMMERCIAL SECTION, ASSISTED DIRECTLY IN ECONOMIC ASPECT OF WORK ON PART-TIME BASIS BY LOCAL EMPLOYEE WHO PROVIDES TRANSLATIONS AND LIMITED RESEARCH; B) COMM - FSR-8 COMMERCIAL OFFICER, FSL-1 COMMERCIAL SPECIALIST, AND FSL-4 SENIOR SECRETARY. AMERICAN SECRETARIAL SUPPORT FOR WHOLE SECTION AND LOCAL SECRETARIAL SUPPORT FOR ECON OFFICER ARE PROVIDED BY USAID/J. AT THIS TIME WE DO NOT HAVE AND DO NOT FORESEE NEAR FUTURE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL AMERICAN STAFF FOR ECON/COMM SECTION. IF RECENTLY DEVELOPING TRENDS IN SECTION'S WORKLOAD CONTINUE, WE MAY NEED TO RECONSIDER. ON OTHER HAND, THERE IS EMPHATICALLY NO REALISTIC POSSIBILITY FOR REDUCTION OF CURRENT AMERICAN STAFF. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT FOLLOWING CHANGES ARE ADVISABLE: A) UPGRADE POSITION OF ECON OFFICER/SECTION CHIEF TO FSO-4 (NOW FSO-5); B) INSURE THAT IF AT ALL POSSIBLE COMMERCIAL OFFICER POSITION (FSO-6) BE FILLED WITH OFFICER AT THAT GRADE AND EXPERIENCED WITH COMMERCIAL WORK, AND C) ADD ONE COMMERCIAL ASSISTANT TO COMPLEMENT OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE. END SUMMARY.

2. SINCE APPROXIMATELY MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR, US BUSINESS INTEREST IN JORDAN HAS GROWN RAPIDLY AS COUNTRY IS VIEWED AS INCREASINGLY

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ATTRACTIVE AS GROWING, THOUGH SMALL, MARKET, SITE OF POTENTIAL IN-

VESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, GATEWAY TO OTHER MIDDLE EAST ARAB MARKETS, AND SITE FOR REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS OFFICES. NUMBER OF AMERICAN BUSINESS OFFICES MORE OR LESS PERMANENTLY LOCATED IN AMMAN HAS GROWN FROM HALF DOZEN A YEAR AGO TO SOME FORTY AT THIS TIME. TO LARGE DEGREE BUT NOT ENTIRELY, THIS INCREASE IS RESULT OF CONTINUED DISTURBANCES IN BEIRUT. WE NOW EXPECT NUMBER OF RESIDENT AND TRANSIT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TO CONTINUE TO GROW BUT AT DIMINISHING RATE. ALSO, IMPORTS INTO JORDAN FROM US ARE GREATER THAN FROM ANY OTHER COUNTRY AND HAVE BEEN INCREASING: US EXPORTS TO JORDAN WERE VALUED AT \$79 MILLION IN 1973, \$105 MILLION IN 1974, AND \$195 MILLION IN 1975. FINALLY, NUMBER OF BUSINESS VISITORS TO COMMERCIAL OFFICE HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED OVER LAST YEAR AND GROWTH WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE. IMPORTANT ASPECT OF GROWTH IN NUMBER OF VISITORS IS THAT IN TWO OF FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, NUMBER OF AMERICAN VISITORS TO COMMERCIAL OFFICE HAS BEEN GREATER THAN LOCAL VISITORS, PHENOMENON UNPRECEDENTED IN EMBASSY MEMORY. TYPICALLY, CALLS BY AMERICAN VISITORS REQUIRE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE TIME AND ASSISTANCE THAN VISITS BY LOCAL BUSINESSMEN.

3. NOVEMBER 1974 INSPECTION REPORT RECOMMENDED CREATION OF SEPARATE ECON/COMM SECTION, WHICH UNTIL THAT TIME HAD BEEN INTEGRATED INTO USAID/J. INDEPENDENT SECTION WAS CREATED LAST YEAR UNDER SUPERVISION OF INCUMBENT ECON OFFICER, WHO IN TURN BEGAN REPORTING DIRECTLY TO DCM. INSPECTORS RECOMMENDED THAT AFTER ELAPSE OF SOME TIME FOLLOWING ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT SECTION, CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO UPGRADING POSITION OF ECON OFFICER/SECTION CHIEF TO FSO-4. WE BELIEVE IT IS NOW TIME TO IMPLEMENT THAT SUGGESTION. ABLE AND AGGRESSIVE INCUMBENT FSO-5 NOW HAS SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECTION OF MODERATE SIZE WHOSE WORKLOAD HAS INCREASED CONSIDERABLY AND BECOME AT SAME TIME MORE VARIED AND EXTENSIVE. IF SUGGESTION BELOW, TO INCREASE STAFF OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE BY ONE ADDITIONAL LOCAL EMPLOYEE IS IMPLEMENTED, CASE BECOMES MUCH STRONGER. WITH TRANSFER OF INCUMBENT IN 18 MONTHS, WE BELIEVE ON BASIS CURRENT SITUATION, THAT POSITION WOULD JUSTIFY AN FSO-4 INCUMBENT.

4. INSPECTION REPORT 1974 ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT POST'S COMMERCIAL WORK WAS "PRESIDED OVER BY FSR-8 JUNIOR OFFICER WITH NO PREVIOUS COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCE." IN PRINCIPLE, WE ALSO SHARE THIS CONCERN. COMMERCIAL OFFICE IS LOCATED AT SOME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISTANCE FROM CHANCERY AND OFFICE OF SECTION CHIEF. CLOSE SUPERVISION OF COMMERCIAL WORK BY SECTION CHIEF NOT REALLY POSSIBLE IN THIS SITUATION THOUGH THAT FACT NOTWITHSTANDING WE DO NOT QUESTION INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE DUE TO LAST YEAR'S RELOCATION IN HEART OF AMMAN'S BUSINESS DISTRICT. WHILE INCUMBENT COMMERCIAL OFFICER HAS COPEd WELL WITH CHANGING NATURE AND INCREASE IN DEMANDS OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE, WE BELIEVE THAT PRESENT AND ANTICIPATED SITUATION CALLS FOR MORE EXPERIENCED OFFICER IN

FUTURE. POSITION NOW CALLS FOR FSO-6 OFFICER, WHICH WE BELIEVE IS APPROPRIATE, ASSUMING THAT OFFICER IS EXPERIENCED IN EMBASSY COMMERCIAL WORK OR HAS HAD COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCE ON OUTSIDE.

5. WITH GROWING DEMANDS ON COMMERCIAL OFFICE, DESCRIBED ABOVE, WE BELIEVE IT NOW APPROPRIATE TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ANOTHER RECOMMENDATION BY 1974 INSPECTION REPORT, THAT OF ADDITION OF SECOND LOCAL EMPLOYEE COMMERCIAL SPECIALIST TO STAFF OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE. FOR SOME TIME, OFFICE'S SECRETARY HAS UNDERTAKEN SOME COMMERCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES SUCH AS PREPARING WTD'S, DRAFTING LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS, SCANNING LOCAL PRESS AND IDENTIFYING TRADE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ARE NOT IN HER POSITION DESCRIPTION BUT WERE MADE NECESSITY BY INCREASED DEMANDS ON COMMERCIAL SPECIALIST AND MADE POSSIBLE BY HER PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE, EXPERIENCE IN COMMERCIAL OFFICE, AND DEDICATION TO HER WORK (MERITORIOUS STEP INCREASES HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED FOR BOTH LOCAL EMPLOYEES IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR EFFORTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS). SUBJECT OF WHETHER IT BEST TO CONFIRM HER IN POSITION SHE IS NOW PARTIALLY FULFILLING AS COMMERCIAL SPECIA

RC#HER REPLACEMENT OR HIRE SECOND COMMERCIAL SPECIALIST REQUIRES FURTHER CONSIDERATION, BUT IN ANY CASE WE BELIEVE THAT NEED FOR NEW POSITION HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED.
PICKERING

NOTE BY OCT: #TEXT AS RECEIVED.

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